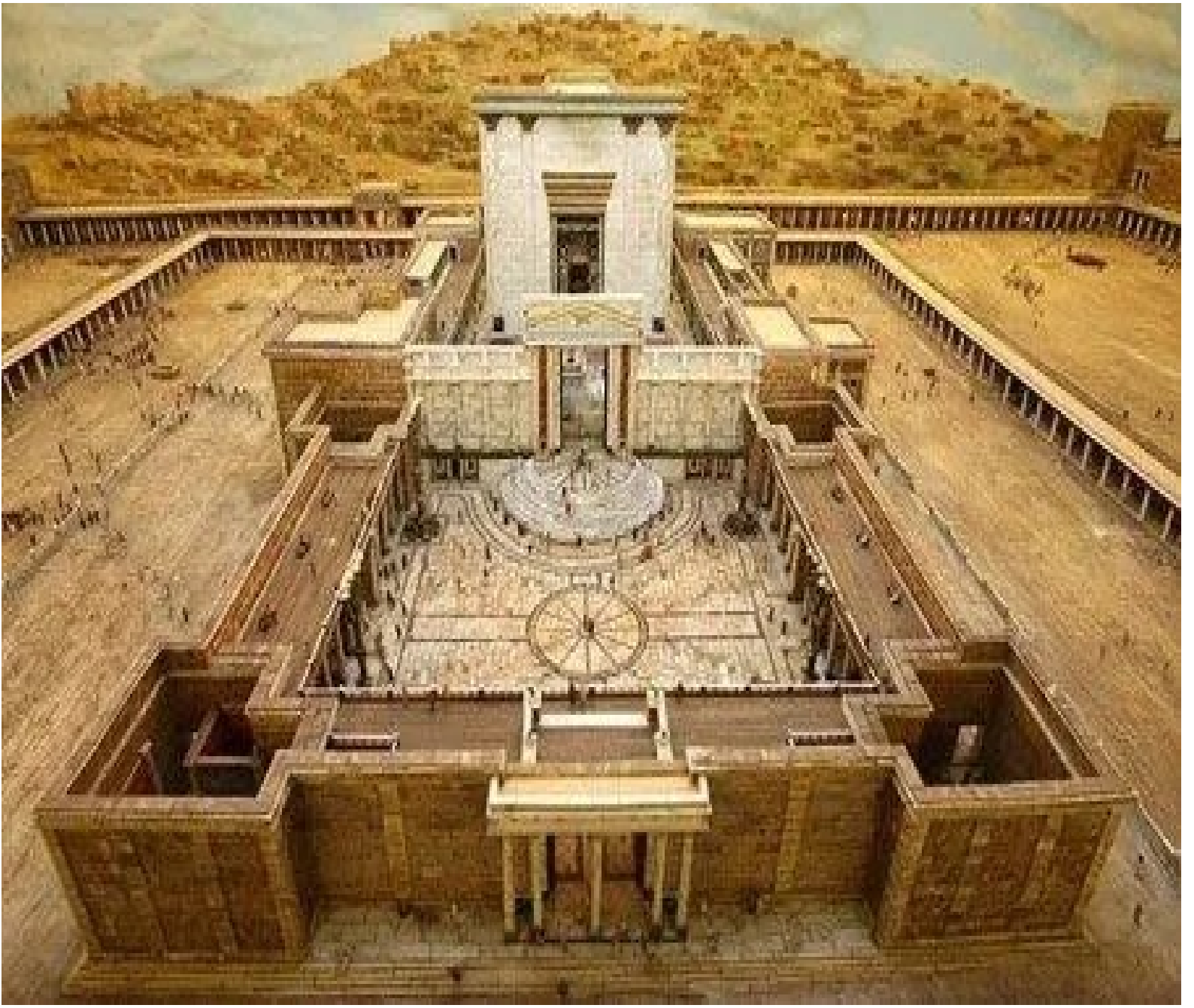
The Temple of Ezekiel



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1. The Man of Sorrows

It may seem strange to begin such a glorious ministry on the Temple of Ezekiel (Chapter 40 ad finem) with a consideration of the "man of sorrows", but every story has its beginning, and so must this one, for the sake of showing the origin and glorious end of the tale.

Like you, I have read the Genesis account of The Creation, and to those pseudo intellectuals who with minds the size of a pea compared with intellect of God, I may say unequivocally, that I believe God and all that He has declared about that Creation including our first father Adam. It was in the early years of coming to Jesus that I was confronted with this verse, ***1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive***. So if Christ is made "alive", He is made alive in just the same manner in which a person with the name Adam died. And if Adam and Christ were not real in form and substance, a parable if you wish to call it that, they were just people of man's imagination, fictitious names, then the whole plot crumbles, and the whole account of redemption is a lie, and Jesus was not raised from the dead because He was made like Adam, a fictitious character.

People skirt this verse because they want to be Christians while embracing current trendy pseudo scientific hypotheses and think that such a blatant compromise is good enough, and go off forgetting what Corinthians ever said. Well shame and dishonour be upon them!

But I want us to think about what was there before the Creation, for there must have been a "something", in some form or other, which we know nothing about,

because God and eternity did not burst onto the scene having been summoned up by nothing, or by some even greater Genie, ***Rev 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last***. No, God was there forever. In this different reality, God existed, moved, planned, and brought into being His eternal plan, ***1Pe 1:20 Christ was chosen <u>even before the world was created</u>, but because of you, he did not come until these last days***. CEV.

It says something most strange in John's Gospel that we trip over without much thought, ***Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God. Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. Joh 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men***. ***Joh 1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not***. This "Word" was Jesus, *Joh 1:14 And the* ***Word was made flesh****, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. Joh 1:15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying,* ***This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.*** *Joh 1:16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. Joh 1:17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*.

He is the lawful judge of Israel and the nations, *Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. Rev 19:12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. Rev 19:13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called* ***The Word of God.*** *Rev 19:14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. Rev 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Rev 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written,* ***KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS***.

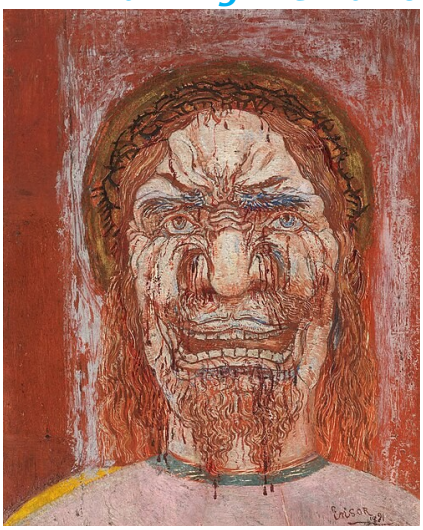
And if you failed to see it, this Word, this Jesus, who made everything that ever was, "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made". Jesus was the Creator, and as God, in some mysterious way, He was the prime mover of Genesis, *Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*. So if God, Elohim = אֱלֹהִים is the Creator in the beginning, **Elohim is Jesus**!

If we truly believe this, we have Jesus' pre-existence, before the creation of the world, before His birth at Bethlehem, before He did any miracles, before He suffered and died. So what is going on in eternity beyond the Creation from nothing, and what was the conversation?

I speak very advisedly, but I think that Jesus had the following objective. In this world which would become crueller by the century, which would become so evil, He said, *Gen 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Gen 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. Gen 6:7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them*.

Jesus would make a way back to Him, as graciously as ever, but not so gracious as to be effortless, and this is the way that He did it. He created two personas, two versions of Himself, two personas, a choice of beings, and this would show where men placed their trust, in one or the other. I think that this, I speculate, is what He did.

Painting The Man of Sorrows (James Ensor 1891).



He firstly showed His face to the world **as the man of sorrows**, *Isa 53:1 Has anyone believed us or seen the mighty power of the LORD in action? Isa 53:2 Like a young plant or a root that sprouts in dry ground, the servant grew up obeying the LORD. He wasn't some handsome king. Nothing about the way he looked made him attractive to us. Isa 53:3 He was hated and rejected; his life was filled with sorrow and terrible suffering. No one wanted to look at him. We despised him and said, "He is a nobody!" Isa 53:4 He suffered and endured great pain for us, but we thought his suffering was punishment from God. Isa 53:5 He was wounded and crushed because of our sins; by taking our punishment, he made us completely well. Isa 53:6 All of us were like sheep that had wandered off. We had each gone our own way, but the LORD gave him the punishment we deserved. Isa 53:7 He was painfully abused, but he did not complain. He was silent like a lamb being led to the butcher, as quiet as a sheep having its wool cut off. Isa 53:8 He was condemned to death without a fair trial. Who could have imagined what would happen to him? His life was taken away because of the sinful things my people had done. Isa 53:9 He wasn't dishonest or violent, but he was buried in a tomb of cruel and rich people. Isa 53:10 The LORD decided his servant would suffer as a sacrifice to take away the sin and guilt of others. Now the servant will live to see his own descendants.* ***He did everything the LORD had planned***. *Isa 53:11 By suffering, the servant will learn the true meaning of obeying the LORD. Although he is innocent, he will take the punishment for the sins of others, so that many of them will no longer be guilty. Isa 53:12 The LORD will reward him with honor and power for sacrificing his life.* ***Others thought he was a sinner, but he suffered for our sins and asked God to forgive us***. CEV.

Then there was the devil, prancing over man, a created being of whose creation little is said so that we should not become fixated upon this deceiver. Like king Saul, head and shoulders over all, comely, all powerful, beautiful although skin deep, the lord of the earth, the adversary created with only partial knowledge, and one who could not tell the truth. This creature "thing" would act as a foil to the **man of sorrows**, with whom he would genuinely offer to Jesus all his satanic kingdoms, the first test of the man of sorrows, *Luk 4:5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. Luk 4:6 And the devil said unto him,* ***All this power will I give thee****, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. Luk 4:7 If* ***thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine****. Luk 4:8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written,* ***Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*****.**

God had given him the kingdoms of dirt and sin, and satan would hand them over to Jesus in a moment, but would he ever, yes the word of a liar is ALWAYS untrustworthy. *Pro 14:25 An honest witness can save your life, but liars can't be trusted.* CEV. Where did the devil get the notion that he was more powerful than God, why it was his own unchecked vanity, his own sense of worth, his overblown sense of superiority? But he was nothing, and as Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss so too had satan a plan to betray Jesus, if only he could get Jesus to worship him, and the one thing that God never gave him was the worship that he craved.

Jesus was to be set before mankind as a suffering man of sorrows, but far worse than this, He would be all of the things that the natural man would despise, He has no form nor comeliness (good looks) there is no beauty that we should desire Him, He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief and we hid as it were our faces from Him, He was despised, we esteemed Him not, we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, afflicted, a lamb to the slaughter, a sheep dumb. He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth, but He shall bear their iniquities. This was the persona of Jesus and throughout the Older Testament He would take on this image.

This was made clear in the Offerings for Sin! The "innocent creature" was "flayed" for the sin of man. Here sweet Jesus was the suffering saviour, a real person, but did all of the people see this? We move to the New Testament to find out. An Ethiopian, a Eunuch from Nubia, and presumably a very rich man, was riding along in his chariot and he was reading from the Book of Isaiah, **out loud**. He could read, the Septuagint or Hebrew or both, showing that he was educated and he had a hand written scroll containing Isaiah Chapter 53, expensive, which I assume he bought at the Temple in Jerusalem while attending some feast. Just at that very moment the Evangelist Philip, coming south happens to meet with him. Coincidence or design? No such thing as chance, for God is in control, and remember that the Eunuch could have been reading hundreds of other scriptures, but no, it was Isaiah 53 that he read. WHY?

Philip asks if he knew what he was reading, not the scroll, but what the scroll meant. But he did not understand, and he needed a teacher, and one had arrived. Philip is invited up into the chariot. *Act 8:32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: Act 8:33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.*
Act 8:34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Act 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. Act 8:36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Act 8:37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Act 8:38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

The question was, “And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?” Was Isaiah talking about his life of suffering or someone else’s life of suffering? That was the unresolved question. So Philip puts it all beyond dispute and tells him, “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, **and preached unto him Jesus**”. It was all about Jesus, He was the **suffering man**.

So Philip goes back to the beginning, and beyond time, and there He is, the Suffering saviour, the man of sorrows, the man we rejected. The first manifestation of the Christ. And the rest for the Eunuch is baptism, a new perspective on life, and an enlightened life following Jesus to the end.

Philip is whisked away at this point having done his work, and we see that an evangelist doesn’t have to tell everything or say everything, for he is just a small cog in God’s big wheel.

2. The Golden Man

Jesus adopted another persona, **the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords** in very contrast to the **man of sorrows**. This was a different way of showing His person, *Mat 2:1 When Jesus was born in the village of Bethlehem in Judea, Herod was king. During this time some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem Mat 2:2 and said, "**Where is the child born to be king of the Jews**? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." Mat 2:3 When King Herod heard about this, he was worried, and so was everyone else in Jerusalem. Mat 2:4 Herod brought together the chief priests and the teachers of the Law of*

*Moses and asked them, "**Where will the Messiah be born**?" Mat 2:5 They told him, "He will be born in Bethlehem, just as the prophet wrote*, CEV.

This persona was not seen until the **man of sorrows** had been seen. In essence, the "man of sorrows" represents the humility, suffering, and sacrifice of Jesus, which are the essential steps that make possible the ultimate experience of God's glory and salvation. Sinful man needs his eyes opened to see Jesus, just as in the story of the man born blind shows. Eventually the man meets Jesus. *Joh 9:35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him, he said to him, Thou, dost thou believe on the Son of God? Joh 9:36 He answered and said, **And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?** Joh 9:37 And Jesus said to him, Thou hast both seen him, and he that speaks with thee is he. Joh 9:38 And he said, I believe, Lord: and he did him homage*. Darby.

I think that Heber got the thought right,

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man ***Thy glory may not see;*
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, love, and purity.

This persona of Jesus was powerful and glorious, wonderful to behold, but this, although laid before them in say the Tabernacle, was just seen as a shrine for all the glory of God, and not Jesus Himself. The Jews saw the “stuff”, the gold, but not the person that it represented.

The idea that the people could become this king, or the other rulers could become this King are brought to a swift conclusion by the words of Daniel. *Dan 2:37 Your Majesty, you are the greatest of kings, and God has highly honored you with power Dan 2:38 over all humans, animals, and birds. You are the head of gold. Dan 2:39 After you are gone, another kingdom will rule, but it won't be as strong. Then it will be followed by a kingdom of bronze that will rule the whole world. Dan 2:40 Next, a kingdom of iron will come to power, crushing and shattering everything. Dan 2:41 This fourth kingdom will be divided—it will be both strong and brittle, just as you saw that the feet and toes were a mixture of iron and clay. Dan 2:43 This kingdom will be the result of a marriage between kingdoms, but it will crumble, just as iron and clay don't stick together. Dan 2:44 During **the time of those kings, the God who rules from heaven will set up an eternal kingdom that will never fall. It will be like the stone that was cut from the mountain, but not by human hands—the stone that crushed the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold.** Your Majesty, in your dream the great God has told you what is going to happen, and you can trust this interpretation*. CEV.

The kingdom of heaven is triumphant, the kingdom of God is secure, the King approaches and becomes more Glorious, the Kingdom is not of this world, from the man Jesus, murdered on the Cross in humility, rises the King of Kings in power and glory. Yet it is not what mankind would expect, a rule from another

place, and indeed there He stays until the programme is completed, when He descends from heaven, *1Co 15:50 My friends, I want you to know that our bodies of flesh and blood will decay. This means that they cannot share in God's kingdom, which lasts forever. 1Co 15:51 I will explain a mystery to you. Not every one of us will die, but we will all be changed. 1Co 15:52 It will happen suddenly, quicker than the blink of an eye. At the sound of the last trumpet the dead will be raised. We will all be changed, so that we will never die again. 1Co 15:53 Our dead and decaying bodies will be changed into bodies that won't die or decay. 1Co 15:54 The bodies we now have are weak and can die. But they will be changed into bodies that are eternal. Then the Scriptures will come true, "Death has lost the battle!* CEV.

King Jesus as revealed in the Old Testament, was clearly not understood, and became almost an idol, or miraculous leader of the people of Israel who championed Israel through thick and thin, whatever they did. The messiah for earthly consumption was an ideal that the people could manipulate, a thing that they could change and it would be compliant and do their bidding. How wrong they were!

The Messiah would deliver the people and He became the rallying point for the nation of Judah, and although they kept sinning, they still thought “God is with us”, but He wasn’t.

This is where in Ezekiel, God finally departs, years after the Captivity. *Eze 11:16 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. Eze 11:17 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. Eze 11:18 And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. Eze 11:19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: Eze 11:20 That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. Eze 11:21 But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD. Eze 11:22 Then* ***did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. Eze 11:23 And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.*** *Eze 11:24 Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me. Eze 11:25 Then I spake unto them of the captivity all the things that the LORD had shewed me*.

This is where we begin our study of Ezekiel's Temple.

3. Ezekiel's Temple Concept

What is your methodology? We first have to look at the Temple within its historical context, what is happening to the people of Israel and why Ezekiel is prophesying the things that he is. The structure of this revelation is important as to the conclusions it brings. I want to give four of my conclusions, from consideration of the Scriptures that mad men always digging for something new, think that they have revealed over the past two hundred years.

- There is no mention of a millennial temple anywhere in Scripture. The word millennial is not mentioned in Ezekiel and the word Temple is not mentioned in the book of Revelation Chapter 20. It is a wicked fiction to tie the two words together and you must ask the people who believe that, to give you definitive Scriptures, not their ramblings.
- There are no mention of Jews (Old Testament Jews) coming back to Jerusalem to inherit the Temple of the book of Revelation. The "Jews" according to Paul, have been assimilated, *Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus*. Why on earth they think that the rules do not apply to the Old Testament Jews, why they should be given a gold card and why they are put in charge of building a Temple when God has got a beautiful building coming out of heaven, I see as just a delirium of deceit.
- There is no mention of reigning on earth in Ezekiel's Temple. It does mention the Holy Temple, but the city of Jerusalem is displaced from the Temple, both are much, much larger, and there is something strange about the land allotment.
- There is no mention of earthly Jerusalem in either Ezekiel's vision or the book of Revelation.

The event of satan's demise from Heaven, is given in, *Luk 10:17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. Luk 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven*. This is before the resurrection, and shows that the Kingdom of God is up and running.

When Jesus goes before Pontius Pilate, He has this conversation, *Joh 18:33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Joh 18:34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Joh 18:35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Joh 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Joh 18:37 Pilate*

therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Joh 18:38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

Jesus was a King, "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice", but a King to listen to. And His Kingdom was not of the World, because if it were the war machine would spring into action to wipe them out, but "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence: but". He has given the world over to satan, but Heaven is His.

The orthodox views on Christ's final coming are:

- The coming of the Lord like a thief:
- The appearance of Christ in the clouds swiftly:
- The gathering of believers to meet Him in the air:
- The final judgment and the establishment of His kingdom:
- The wicked being punished:
- The resurrection of the dead:
- The transformation of believers' bodies:
- The earth being renewed:

4. The Prophet Ezekiel

Preparatory reading: Ezekiel. Yes, all of it!

The purpose of this overview of Ezekiel is to get the background information necessary for us to be in a position to examine Chapters 40 to 48, the Temple vision of Ezekiel. It is quite extraordinary that many "Christians" have such strong opinions on Ezekiel's temple, yet have hardly read about it once for themselves. For example, they hold that the Temple is built in the future, that it is called "The Millennial Temple", that all the "card carrying Jews" around at that future time, fall down before the Messiah, that Jewish sacrifices and festivals become acceptable again despite Jesus having put them away, and that this edifice, Ezekiel's Temple, remains to be built in Jerusalem on Earth.

Of course, having not fully engaged in a study, these "Christians" take for their guides, well known teachers, whom they are quite confident have left them the truth and lean heavily upon them. Their opinion is not derived from personal study, but derived from the sayings of others, second hand knowledge. We should always ask for Scripture in support of statements and where there is none

or a very tenuous link, we should immediately see a red flag, and wait for more revelation. Being a Christian, additionally, does not mean having ALL of the answers to everything.

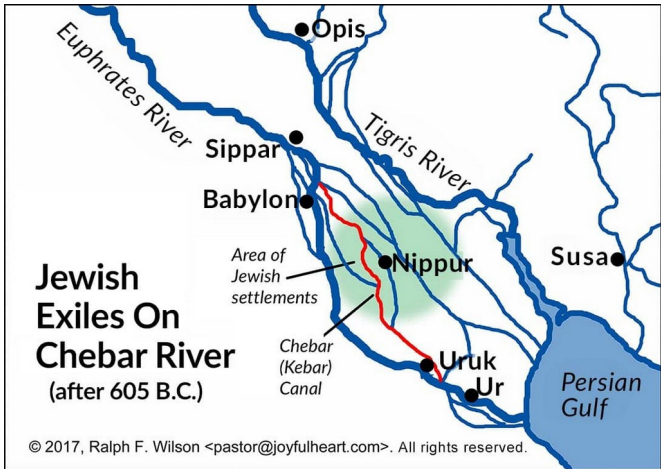
When I was about 6 months old in Christ, nearly 60 years ago, I was privy to a conversation between a 75 year old Christian and one only slightly younger. They were discussing this passage from Ezekiel, *Eze 43:1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: Eze 43:2 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. Eze 43:3 And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. Eze 43:4 And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east*.

I could not enter the conversation because of my ignorance of Scripture, and I bowed to these two great sages, who seemed to know much more than I did. Yes, it said there that the Glory of the Lord would enter by the east gate and would fill the Temple, but what they didn't say was, did Ezekiel have an Earthly or Heavenly Temple in mind? Some believe that in Ezekiel's vision, the glory of the Lord enters the Temple through the earthly east gate, specifically the "gate whose prospect was toward the east", where the prophet sees the Divine presence entering through this gate. The east gate is also significant in other Biblical contexts, such as the sealed Golden Gate in Jerusalem, which is believed to be the entry point for the Messiah in the future (sic!).

Jesus is widely believed to have entered Jerusalem through the Eastern Gate, also known as the Golden Gate. This gate is located on the eastern wall of the Temple Mount and was considered one of the few access points into the city from the east. Christian and Muslim traditions commonly associate this gate with Jesus' entry on Palm Sunday. But that gate was flattened by the Romans and it is not specifically mentioned in Scripture. So this adds to the confusion. None of what people said about Ezekiel's Temple seemed to fit with what the Bible said and the more I read the more confusing it was. I have decided to look at it intently now having pushed it into the background of my studies for too many years, I seemed to get on with Bible study without it, yet I knew that it required some effort. Now at an age exceeding that of the ancient sages of my youth, I am attempting to unravel the mystery. I will try to do so without speculation and stick to the Bible for explanations.

The captivity of Judah into Babylon was not a sudden and singular event. I remind you that there are three separate deportations which occurred over 20 years,

1. First deportation: Around 606 BC.
2. Second deportation: 597 BC.
3. Third deportation: 586 BC, when Jerusalem was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.



The first deportation carried Daniel to Babylon (606 BC) and the second deportation carried Ezekiel away (597 BC). We meet Ezekiel at the river Chebar, *Eze 1:1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. Eze 1:2 In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, Eze 1:3 The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him.*

The "thirtieth year" refers to his age. He wrote the book when he was thirty years, four months and five days of age. He was living by the river Chebar or Kabar in the ancient Babylonian empire. Today, the Arabic name for the river is called Shatt en-Nil. Its location was identified on two clay tablets that were unearthed at Nippur. It was called the Great Canal. It was located near the city of Babylon and was one of the tributaries of the Euphrates. Ezekiel 3:15 says this was the place where the exiles from Judah were located.

The sad tale is recorded in a Psalm of the exiles who lived on this canal, *Psa 137:1 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. Psa 137:2 We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. Psa 137:3 For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. Psa 137:4 How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land? Psa 137:5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. Psa 137:6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.*

"Ezekiel lived with the Jewish exiles from Judah on the Great Canal of Chebar while at the same time, Daniel was the prime minister under King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel is mentioned three times in this book. Noah and Job are each mentioned once. Even though Daniel and Ezekiel lived within about 60 miles (96.6km) of one another, we do not know if they ever spoke with each other. Ezekiel and Daniel were almost the same age and Jeremiah the prophet was about twenty years older and was considered the sage prophet. There is an important lesson here for us. Daniel was in the king's palace and Ezekiel was with the exiles. Yet, they were both prophets of God. Both men were used of

God. From the world's perspective, Ezekiel did not accomplish much because the people did not respond to his messages and change. But both men were equally outstanding prophets of God. We should never look down upon a man because his ministry is not in the palace. What matters is does he faithfully speak for God."

Ezekiel was a prophet of God who lived most of his life in the region of Babylon during the time of the exile. In addition to the trauma of losing his homeland, Ezekiel lost his wife suddenly. I mention this early on because it was a major tragedy, one of the many hardships that were part of being a prophet. The circumstances of Ezekiel's wife's death were Divinely orchestrated, and her death was used by God to teach His people in captivity a lesson.

Why did God kill Ezekiel's wife? Scripture never frames it in those terms, but it's clear that her death was according to God's plan, as everyone's death is. *Psa 31:4 Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength. Psa 31:5 Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.* Here is Ezekiel's record of the event, starting with God's announcement to Ezekiel that his wife would die. Eze *24:15 Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Eze 24:16 Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down*.

So Ezekiel has a warning before the sudden death of his beloved wife, God was going to take away "the delight of his eyes." We naturally question why this had to be, and God's further instructions to Ezekiel prompt even more questions. *Eze 24:17 Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. Eze 24:18 So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded*. The prophet Ezekiel obediently followed through on his difficult instructions, "So I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded". When the love of Ezekiel's life died he did not weep openly or observe the traditional mourning rituals. As God had command, he kept his emotions bottled up inside.

He was mentally tough, and no doubt he had to be, but to go through this he must have known the wider truth of eternal life in the presence of the Lord. God used the death of Ezekiel's wife as a sign to the people of Judah. Those around Ezekiel began asking him to explain his silent sorrow. *Eze 24:19 And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so? Eze 24:20 Then I answered them, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Eze 24:21 Speak unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword. Eze 24:22 And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. Eze 24:23 And your*

tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another. Eze 24:24 Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

The prophecy occasioned by the death of Ezekiel's wife was a dire one. Solomon's temple in Jerusalem, the delight of the people's eyes, would be suddenly destroyed at a stroke, the same as Ezekiel's wife. And the people, when they heard the news in Babylon, would respond in stunned, sorrowful silence. Their grief would be so overwhelming that groaning and pining away would be all they could do. The death of Ezekiel's wife mirrored the death of the beloved city for it was the death of Gods wife, all that was of the flesh would be destroyed that the Spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord (1 Cor 5:5), *Rev 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Rev 21:3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God*.

The Lord gave the history of the great city Jerusalem, not dissimilar to Babylon the Great and with a similar end. The beauty of Jerusalem was her downfall. *Eze 16:1 The LORD said: Eze 16:2 Ezekiel, son of man, remind the people of Jerusalem of their disgusting sins Eze 16:3 and tell them that I, the LORD God, am saying: Jerusalem, you were born in the country where Canaanites lived. Your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite. Eze 16:4 When you were born, no one cut you loose from your mother or washed your body. No one rubbed your skin with salt and olive oil, and wrapped you in warm blankets. Eze 16:5 Not one person loved you enough to do any of these things, and no one even felt sorry for you. You were despised, thrown into a field, and forgotten. Eze 16:6 I saw you lying there, rolling around in your own blood, and I couldn't let you die. Eze 16:7 I took care of you, like someone caring for a tender, young plant. You grew up to be a beautiful young woman with perfect breasts and long hair, but you were still naked. Eze 16:8 When I saw you again, you were old enough to have sex. So I covered your naked body with my own robe. Then I solemnly promised that you would belong to me and that I, the LORD God, would take care of you. Eze 16:9 I washed the blood off you and rubbed your skin with olive oil. Eze 16:10 I gave you the finest clothes and the most expensive robes, as well as sandals made from the best leather. Eze 16:11 I gave you bracelets, a necklace, Eze 16:12 a ring for your nose, some earrings, and a beautiful crown. Eze 16:13 Your jewelry was gold and silver, and your clothes were made of only the finest material and embroidered linen. Your bread was baked from fine flour, and you ate honey and olive oil. You were as beautiful as a queen, Eze 16:14 and everyone on earth knew it. I, the LORD God, had helped you become a lovely young woman. Eze 16:15 You learned that you were attractive enough to have any man you wanted, so you offered yourself to every passerby.* CEV.

Jerusalem is a harlot sitting on the mountains of Israel, Babylon sits on the water., *Rev 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: Rev 17:2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication*. God would restore the great city of Jerusalem, but not on this old earth, as we shall see, and when He had thoroughly purged His threshing floor, Jerusalem the bride would emerge as His beloved for all eternity.

5. The Anointing Glory Part One

Ezekiel was in the **second wave** of the captivity, literally, the "transmigration" to the land of Babel. We should not see it as a persecution of the Jews, a pogrom or genocide, but as the transfer of the people was from their homeland to a strange land. If Nebuchadnezzar had wanted the Jews dead he could have saved himself the trouble of taking them on a long journey to kill them, and just murdered them in Jerusalem. Instead, Babylon was a refuge and a place for thinking about what they had done to offend God. *Jer 29:4 that the LORD All-Powerful, the God of Israel, had said: I had you taken from Jerusalem to Babylonia. Now I tell you Jer 29:5 to settle there and build houses. Plant gardens and eat what you grow in them. Jer 29:6 Get married and have children, then help your sons find wives and help your daughters find husbands, so they can have children as well. I want your numbers to grow, not to get smaller. Jer 29:7 Pray for peace in Babylonia and work hard to make it prosperous. The more successful that nation is, the better off you will be*. CEV.

The Jews must have felt a great shame in being taken as captives, humbled by the Babylonian army, a Semitic people like them with the same roots as them. It was as though their wider family had captured and taken them away from what was destroying them. As Ezekiel and his wife moved from Jerusalem, through Galilee and up the Hula valley towards Damascus, they would have been aware of the rich history of Israel’s past and recalled the battles and the heroes of Israel. The sadness would have been overwhelming as they passed by the ancient landmarks. With every footstep, they moved from the familiar surroundings which gave them comfort, into alien territory and a growing uncertainty about the future.

Imagine how you would feel being taken away from your town, a great column of people winding their way past crowds of onlookers, looking with curiosity at this sad band of prisoners. Every step that you took was to lead you away from home and the feeling of isolation would grow by the day. A stateless person, with no place to call home, like the rough sleepers, owning nothing and all your belongings and possessions gone.

Ezekiel and his wife eventually arrive at a refugee camp by the Chebar canal, where as a redundant Levite with no priestly duties, I imagine he did what others did, launched into an agricultural career. Those soft hands soon became calloused, his skin darker from working in the sun, and the prospect of any change in his life were remote to say the least.

This is where we join him. *Eze 1:1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. Eze 1:2 In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, Eze 1:3 The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him*.

Ezekiel had been in captivity for 5 years, and was now 30 years old, the age of the mature priest. *Num 4:34 And Moses and Aaron and the chief of the congregation numbered the sons of the Kohathites after their families, and after the house of their fathers, Num 4:35* ***From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old****, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation: Num 4:36 And those that were numbered of them by their families were two thousand seven hundred and fifty. Num 4:37 These were they that were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do service in the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moses and Aaron did number according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses*. Ezekiel was the same age as Jesus when he began his ministry. *Luk 3:23 Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about* ***thirty years of age****, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli*, ESV.

> "If Ezekiel were thirty years old in 593, therefore, he would have been born about 622, during the reign of the pious King Josiah. About 600, when he was some twenty-three years of age, the prophet married. With his wife he went to Babylonia as an exile in 597 at the age of twenty-six. The last dated prophecy of his book (Ezk 29:17) is that of the year 571, when he would have been fifty-six. Meanwhile he would have lost his wife when he was thirty-seven (24:18)." (Vawter and Hoppe)

While working by the canal Ezekiel receives a vision of God, 6 years **before** the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Suddenly the sky lights up and he is transported. *Eze 1:4 I saw a windstorm blowing in from the north. Lightning flashed from a huge cloud and lit up the whole sky with a dazzling brightness. The fiery center of the cloud was as shiny as polished metal, Eze 1:5 and in that center I saw what looked like four living creatures. They were somewhat like humans, Eze 1:6 except that each one had four faces and four wings. Eze 1:7 Their legs were straight, but their feet looked like the hoofs of calves and sparkled like bronze. Eze 1:8 Under each of their wings, these creatures had a*

human hand. Eze 1:9 The four creatures were standing back to back with the tips of their wings touching. They moved together in every direction, without turning their bodies. Eze 1:10 Each creature had the face of a human in front, the face of a lion on the right side, the face of a bull on the left, and the face of an eagle in back. CEV.

It is like the vision of Isaiah some 150 years before, when that other great prophet received a vision of the Almighty before he assumed his ministry. *Isa 6:1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I had a vision of the LORD. He was on his throne high above, and his robe filled the temple. Isa 6:2 Flaming creatures with six wings each were flying over him. They covered their faces with two of their wings and their bodies with two more. They used the other two wings for flying, Isa 6:3 as they shouted, "Holy, holy, holy, LORD All-Powerful! The earth is filled with your glory." Isa 6:4 As they shouted, the doorposts of the temple shook, and the temple was filled with smoke. Isa 6:5 Then I cried out, "I'm doomed! Everything I say is sinful, and so are the words of everyone around me. Yet I have seen the King, the LORD All-Powerful." Isa 6:6 One of the flaming creatures flew over to me with a burning coal that it had taken from the altar with a pair of metal tongs. Isa 6:7 It touched my lips with the hot coal and said, "This has touched your lips. Your sins are forgiven, and you are no longer guilty."* CEV.

Ezekiel gives us a much more comprehensive picture of God's throne. There is a common theme throughout the Bible, that wherever God's dwelling is, there too are the creatures with wings, the "cherubim". We go back to the garden that God planted eastward in Eden and find the cherubim guarding the way to the Tree of Life. Were there four of them, but it doesn't say? These creatures blocked man from entering the garden, and it seems to me that they formed a defensive perimeter around the holiness of God and His sacred places to stop man from approaching Him.

At the establishment of the Tabernacle, there was a sacred box manufactured, the Ark, upon which were made cherubim fused with the lid of the box. They resided in the Holy of Holies, into which the High priest entered **once a year** to make Atonement for the people. The image of the cherubim was made to **STOP** man from coming into the presence of God. The sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu offered strange, or unlawful incense before the Lord and He killed them. *Lev 10:1 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. Lev 10:2 And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. Lev 10:3 Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace*.

I am reminded of our Lords words. *Joh 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* Jesus stands

in the way of men who would enter into the presence of God, He being the only way. How on earth did we come to an evangelism where men throw the door wide open to the world and his wife, encouraging them just to “give their heart to Jesus”, that is all, and we have made what is an impossibility for sinful man, into a possibility , to a certainty of life with God? What changed? Nothing as far as I can see, only a load of lies and deceits, put out by modern man. God is still Holy and He hasn’t lowered the bar even if man has. *Mat 7:13 Go in through the narrow gate. The gate to destruction is wide, and the road that leads there is easy to follow. A lot of people go through that gate. Mat 7:14 But the gate to life is very narrow. The road that leads there is so hard to follow that only a few people find it.* CEV.

The “altar call”, the “decision for Christ”, the “give your heart to Jesus”, whatever you like to call it, is of recent origin, just as dispensationalism is of recent origin, just as “baptism in the spirit and speaking in tongues” is of recent origin, just as many practices of the churches are of recent origin. The history of the altar call practice is critiqued below,

> “The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel.” (Mark 1:15). These opening words of Jesus’ ministry, according to James Edwards, follow a characteristically Old Testament structure where divine action and blessings are to be followed by a duty or response on the part of the hearer. Put simply, when God speaks, people should respond.
>
> The Apostles follow suit. In the book of Acts, for example, after the Gospel has been presented, Peter and Paul routinely offer an invitation to “repent,” “believe,” or “repent and be baptized.” Although the response varies slightly, there is consistently a call to action that follows the proclamation of the Gospel (**I note that this is to Jews who have a knowledge of scripture. Paul adopts a different line with the Greeks at Athens, Acts 17**. MW}. While a declaration from God has always demanded a response, the invitation, or “walking the aisle,” is a fairly recent development.
>
> George Whitefield, the early 18th Century preacher, helped prepare the way for the altar call with his innovative preaching style. In contrast to the scripted and theologically dense sermons that marked Puritan preaching, Whitefield delivered a winsome and lively sermon that left his hearers spellbound. Whitefield’s appeal was more emotional, targeting the individual with the offer to be born-again (**1/3rd of his sermons were about the “new birth” but the new birth cannot be acted upon for the spirit goes where it will**. MW). Whitefield’s persuasive preaching compelled people to respond. Even Benjamin Franklin, who disagreed theologically with Whitefield, could not help but empty his pockets of all his money thanks to a “stroke of (Whitefield’s) oratory.”

Historians Douglas Sweeney and Mark Rogers claim that Whitefield did not have altar calls and would have been clueless as to what one was. Whitefield's sermons, however, do signal a turn in American preaching, a turn that would set the stage for the altar call.

It was the camp meetings of the early 1800's that gave birth to the altar call. These camp meetings, occurring in the backcountry of a young America, were often chaotic. One camp meeting observer describes a scene of hearers "agitated" by the power of God and "swelling and urging like the sea in a storm." Eventually, the disorder marking these early camp meetings was calmed as preachers began to invite individuals to the altar in a more systematic way. The goal was to have a way of tracking those responding to the preacher's message.

It was Charles Grandison Finney who masterfully engineered and dignified what had been a fairly crude invitation system. Finney came to faith in 1821 and quickly became a successful, yet unconventional, Presbyterian preacher. For Finney, the formula for a successful revival was as simple as getting wheat to grow; provide proper soil, sunlight and water, and success will follow. Mark A. Noll explains Finney's logic by saying, "Since God had established reliable laws in the natural world and since humans were created with the ability to discern those laws, it was obvious that the spiritual world worked on the same basis."(**sic! Does it?**)

According to Finney, one of the ingredients for a successful revival was the "anxious bench." This bench was reserved at the front of the church for any respondents who would come forward for individual counsel and prayer. Finney's method of inviting congregants to the front in response to the sermon stuck, becoming standard practice for many American evangelicals.

Consider D.L. Moody, the late 19th Century evangelist who regularly called individuals to the altar following his sermons. If Finney saw the altar call as a tool to bring about salvation, Moody was quick to point out that only the Spirit awakens sinners, and the individual's trip to the altar is simply a sign marking one's salvation.

As one moves into the 20th Century, it was the "Billys" who used the altar call with great success. While playing baseball for the Chicago White Stockings, Billy Sunday attended a church service that would profoundly impact his life and, through his extensive preaching, the lives of many others. Upon hearing the invitation to respond to the Gospel, Sunday went forward. Lyle Dorsett describes it this way: "Those legs that stepped into the batter's box with confidence and sped down the baselines with breath-taking speed and abandon were

now unsteady—moving with the tentative deliberation of a frightened man unsure of his journey and destiny."

After stumbling over some chairs, nervous Sunday made his way to the front. In contrast to his walk to the altar, Sunday's preaching was unwavering, and the altar call was a regular part of this early 20th Century preacher's strategy.

Billy Graham, thanks to his use of a new medium, television, has reached countless individuals worldwide with the Gospel. One of the characteristics of Graham's evangelism has been the waves of individuals making their way forward in response to his preaching. R. Alan Street has noted that Graham's invitation has evolved. Originally, Graham's call was progressive. He would ask for attendees to close their eyes and bow their heads. Then Graham would ask individuals, with heads bowed and eyes closed, to raise their hands if they had accepted Jesus. Those who raised their hands were asked to proceed to the front.

According to Street, Graham eventually dropped the raising of hands request and simply had individuals come forward as heads were bowed. During the mid 1960s, Graham trimmed his invitation even more, giving only a one-step command; he simply asked individuals to come forward.

There are signs that the altar call that has played such an influential role in American Christianity is falling out of favor with some evangelicals, especially younger ones. Brett McCracken, author of Hipster Christianity, describes a younger generation of evangelicals that "cringe at the thought of an altar call." For those disagreeing with this evangelical practice, the altar call is considered manipulative and tends to be fraught with bait-and-switch tactics. Although it is uncertain what will become of this evangelical practice, the altar call has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on American evangelicalism.

The further we go on beyond the time of the crucifixion, the further away we go from the truth which Jesus instituted. Go back even further and look at the Tabernacle and Temple of Solomon and you will see that the invitation to God's presence **was not given by man**, but **by the Almighty God**, and **the cherubim guarded God**.

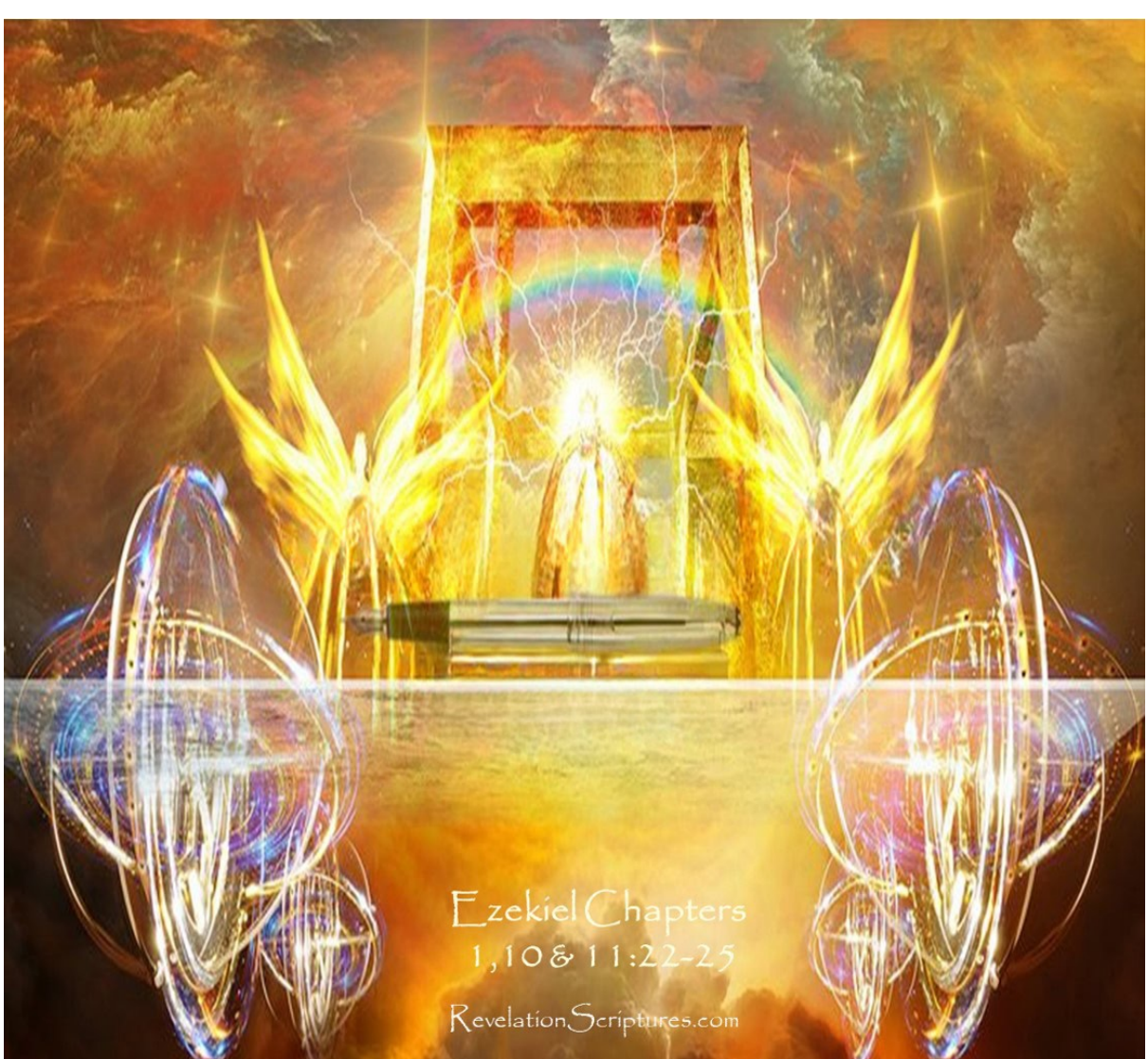
As for Ezekiel, the man, through his life he was to be a living parable of God's dealings with the nation of Israel. His life would become a stage play for those of the captivity to watch and learn as he enacted God's messages. The people of Israel, taken from the comfort of their homeland would now have to seriously consider what they had done to get here as slaves. Ezekiel would tell them.

Ezekiel had started out as a priest, become a prophet in exile, and now would become a watchman of the people. *Eze 3:17 Son of man, I have made thee a* ***watchman*** *unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. Eze 3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Eze 3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Eze 3:20 Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Eze 3:21 Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul. Eze 3:22 And the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee*.

Ezekiel is a warning to the Jews but he is also a warning for us today that easy believism has not been given by God.

6. The Anointing Glory Part Two

The guardians of the Almighty, whether symbolic or actual are always part of the throne of God, from Eden to the Temple and beyond. The throne of God appears later in Daniel Chapter 7, and again here in Ezekiel Chapter 1 which mirrors Revelation Chapter 4.



The cherubim, with slight variants, appear throughout the Old Testament and at the end, in the New Testament. A comparison between Ezekiel and Revelation is given below.

The creatures, the cherubim, form the carriage upon which the Almighty rides. They are the transport of

Rev 4:1 After this I looked, and, b
voice which I heard was as it were
hither, and I will shew thee things w
was in the spirit: and, behold, a
throne. Rev 4:3 And he that sat
stone: and *there was a rainbow*
emerald. Rev 4:4 And round about
the seats I saw four and twenty el
on their heads crowns of gold.
lightnings and thunderings and
burning before the throne, wh
before the throne *there was a sea*

behind. **Rev 4:7 And the first b**
a calf, and the third beast had
a flying eagle. Rev 4:8 **And the**
him*; and* ***they were full of eyes***
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almight
when those beasts give glory and
who liveth for ever and ever,

delight, the undercarriage, the conveyance of God. I have given the summary from the study we did on them, below.

Summary from "A study on Revelation", p138,

https://archive.org/details/REVELATIONByMAW/page/n137/mode/2up?q=cherubim&view=theater

1. **The creatures are living (i.e. characterising LIFE).**
2. **They show 4 divisions of creation.**
3. **They have an intimate relationship to the throne of God.**
4. **They accompany Christ.**
5. **They display worship.**
6. **They show the attributes of omniscience (eyes), and omnipotence (wheels and wings).**
7. **They bear the throne (rule).**
8. **They function under the SPIRIT.**
9. **They exhibit holiness and maintain holiness (c.f. Gen 3 v 24).**
10. **They guard the holiness of God in the tabernacle.**

I am suggesting that the living (creatures) or Cherubim manifest the Divine power and omniscience of God in creation and redemption, a symbolic picture of God at work in His creation, governing, judging, purifying and encouraging. God, seeing throughout His works (i.e. knowing) and God maintaining (the unity of His upholding Spirit). His attributes also praise Him, as all His works praise and manifest His Holy name.

Upon the shoulders of the creatures is carried God's throne. *Eze 1:22 And the likeness of the* ***firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal,*** *stretched forth over their heads above. Eze 1:23 And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies. Eze 1:24 And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings. Eze 1:25 And there was a voice from* ***the firmament*** *that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings. Eze 1:26 And* ***above the firmament*** *that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. Eze 1:27 And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even*

downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. Eze 1:28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

The "firmament" = **רָקִ֣יעַ** is first mentioned in Genesis. *Gen 1:6 And God said, Let there be a **firmament** in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. Gen 1:7 And God made the **firmament**, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the **firmament**: and it was so. Gen 1:8 And God called the **firmament** Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day*. Another translation puts it, *Gen 1:6 And God said, "Let there be **an expanse** between the waters, to separate the waters from the waters." Gen 1:7 So God made the expanse and separated the waters beneath it from the waters above. And it was so. Gen 1:8 God **called the expanse (sky) heaven =** **שָׁמַ֑יִם.** And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.* BSB.

The expanse is the heavens. *Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens =* **שָׁמַ֖יִם** *and the earth*. It is the realm between the waters from which creation came, and the waters which are now far distant from earth. We might use the term space to define it. This is the region that the Almighty regulates, above the creatures and wheels of the chariot, and from which God reigns over all creation.

It is hard to take all of this in. Is it a real "sky chariot" or is it something symbolic. For example, did Elijah see a real chariot. *2Ki 2:11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 2Ki 2:12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, **the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof**. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces*. I think it appears real to Elijah, to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, to John etc, but to limit God to a small and finite appearance does not do the Almighty justice. God makes Himself known in His limited display to mortal man.

But this is not the important issue of why God made Himself known in this fashion to Ezekiel. It was to commission him into the Lord's service. *Eze 2:1 And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. Eze 2:2 And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. Eze 2:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day*. Ezekiel is going to be given a commission for the Lord, and He the Lord is here in power, to constitute Ezekiel an ambassador, with all the power of heaven bearing witness to all men, that this is so.

In the context of Christianity, "Ambassadors for Christ" refers to the role and responsibility of believers to represent Jesus Christ and His teachings in the world. This concept is rooted in, *2Co 5:20 We are ambassadors therefore for Christ, God as it were beseeching by us, we entreat for Christ, Be reconciled to God*. Darby. This states that Christians are "ambassadors for Christ" and that God is making His appeal through them. This means that believers are entrusted with the message of reconciliation and are called to live in a way that reflects Christ's character and values. Ezekiel was now made ready to serve Christ, and in the final vision of the Temple, he sees the Prince Himself, Jesus.

The commission is one which he had no choice in. *Eze 2:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to nations that are rebellious, which have rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me unto this very day*; Ezekiel's commission was to be a watchman. He is like God to the people of Israel.

7. The Watchman

Ezekiel was singled out by the Lord for a specific task. *Eze 2:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to nations that are rebellious, which have rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me unto this very day; Eze 2:4 and these children are impudent and hard-hearted: I am sending thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah. Eze 2:5 And they, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear—for they are a rebellious house—yet shall they know that there hath been a prophet among them. Eze 2:6 And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, and be not afraid of their words; for briars and thorns are with thee, and thou dwellest among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, and be not dismayed at their faces; for they are a rebellious house. Eze 2:7 And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear; for they are rebellious. Eze 2:8 And thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. Eze 2:9 And I looked, and behold, a hand was put forth toward me; and behold, a roll of a book therein. Eze 2:10 And he spread it out before me; and it was written within and without; and there were written in it lamentations, and mourning, and woe.* Darby. The Almighty likens the Israelites to "nations that are rebellious!", like Gentile nations, because all the ways of Isreal, all their idolatry were the same.

In the book of Ezekiel, there's a significant "roll" or scroll incident that symbolizes the prophet's function and God's message. God gives Ezekiel a scroll containing words of lamentation, mourning, and woe, which Ezekiel is to eat, signifying the

internalization and subsequent delivery of God's message. This event highlights Ezekiel's duty as a prophet to faithfully communicate God's word to the people, regardless of its content. Ezekiel tastes and sees that the Lord is good, but deep within him, as he assimilates the Word of God he realises the purgative effect of it.

It should happen to us Christians too. We taste the sweet word of Christ, as we begin our journey in the faith, and we can't get enough of that precious substance, and like chocolate to a child, we eat too much without a thought for the consequences, and are soon sick. It's a bit like that chocolate we used to have called Ex-lax. Only a small amount was recommended as it had a purgative effect, but to a child it was chocolate, and too much had dire consequences. Sometimes we do not know what we are ingesting with the word of God, and when it comes to digesting, we find that hard and distressing.

I think it is the consequence of sin, and although we might not be conscious of it at first, sin gains shape and power as we digest the word. *Rom 7:7 Does this mean that the Law is sinful? Certainly not! But if it had not been for the Law, I would not have known what sin is really like. For example, I would not have known what it means to want something that belongs to someone else, unless the Law had told me not to do that. Rom 7:8 It was sin that used this command as a way of making me have all kinds of desires. But without the Law, sin is dead. Rom 7:9 Before I knew about the Law, I was alive. But as soon as I heard that command, sin came to life, Rom 7:10 and I died. The very command that was supposed to bring life to me, instead brought death. Rom 7:11 Sin used this command to trick me, and because of it I died*. CEV.

The same thing happened to the seer of Patmos, some 600 years later. *Rev 10:8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. Rev 10:9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me,* ***Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.*** *Rev 10:10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. Rev 10:11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings*. The ministry of Ezekiel had not ended it continued through subsequent generations!

The bizarre image of eating a scroll is a pivotal moment in Ezekiel's as well as Revelation's prophetic visions. Prophetic and apocalyptic visions are known for their peculiar knack of blending the everyday with the supernatural or surreal. Both Ezekiel and the book of Revelation turn the unremarkable act of eating into a powerful revelatory act. Ezekiel and the Seer, as the first-person narrator of the Apocalypse of John is often called, are commanded to "eat this scroll" in order to receive God's heavenly knowledge and to be able to act upon it as instructed.

Now we come to the task, having consumed the scroll, Ezekiel is ready to undertake his task. *Eze 3:16 And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Eze 3:17 Son* ***of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel****: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.* He could speak as of God and be a prophet, but he was also **a watchman**, and this was his primary task.

The watchman had a very important task.

He needs good eyes to see what is going on. *2Ki 9:17 And there stood* ***a watchman*** *on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company…….. 2Ki 9:20 And* ***the watchman*** *told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously……..*

Psa 127:1 A Song of degrees for Solomon. Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, ***the watchman*** *waketh but in vain……..*

Act 16:26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. Act 16:27 And ***the keeper of the prison*** *awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had fled. Act 16:28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here……..*

Eze 3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Eze 3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Eze 3:20 Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Eze 3:21 Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul. Eze 3:22 And the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee. Eze 3:23 Then I arose, and went forth into the plain: and, behold, the glory of the LORD stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar: and I fell on my face. Eze 3:24 Then the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house. Eze 3:25 But thou, O son of man, behold, they shall put bands upon thee, and shall bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among them: Eze 3:26 And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover: for they

are a rebellious house. Eze 3:27 But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house.

As for Ezekiel, the man, through his life, was to be a living parable of God's dealings with the nation of Israel. His life would become a stage play for those of the captivity to watch and learn as he enacted God's messages. The people of Israel, taken from the comfort of their homeland would now have to seriously consider what they had done to get here as slaves. Ezekiel would tell them.

Ezekiel had started out as a priest, become a prophet in exile, and now would become a watchman of the people. *Eze 3:17 Son of man, I have made thee a* ***watchman*** *unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. Eze 3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Eze 3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Eze 3:20 Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Eze 3:21 Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul. Eze 3:22 And the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee*.

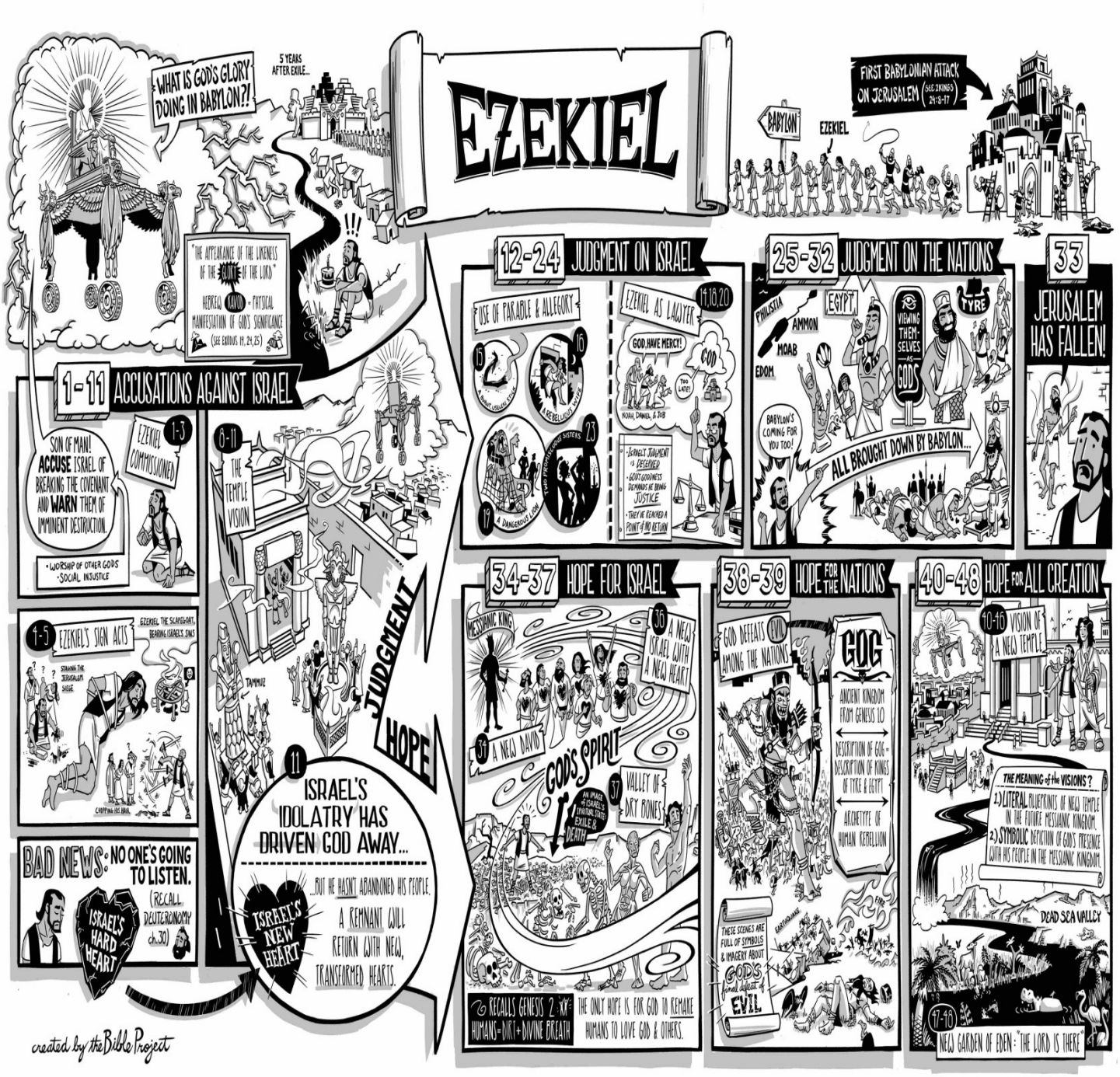
Ezekiel is a warning to the Jews but he is also a warning for us today.

Daniel was among the first group of exiles taken to Babylon, following Nebuchadnezzar's first incursion into Palestine in 605 BC. This is also described in the book of Daniel 1:1-2. He was part of a group of young Israelites, including his three friends, who were taken to Babylon to be trained in the literature and language of that nation.

Ezekiel was a priest who had been living in Jerusalem during the first Babylonian attack on the city (2 Kings. 24:8-17). The city itself was spared, but the king of Babylon took a first wave of Israelite prisoners into exile. Ezekiel was among them. The book begins five years after these traumatic events, and we find Ezekiel sitting on the bank of an irrigation canal near his Israelite refugee camp, on his 30th birthday no less. It's the year that he would have been installed as a priest in Jerusalem.

8. Judgement Day

I have used The Bible Project to illustrate the complicated pictures that Ezekiel uses to draw the various elements of his prophecy. The other prophets, especially Isaiah, do the same somewhat cryptic images to illustrate their prophecies. It seems hard to me coming into these from a western perspective,



to make sense of them and sort out what they mean in context. So it is with grateful thanks to **TBP** that they have made a thoroughly comprehensive job of it.

Complicated Ezekiel is, and it is small wonder that we modern Christians just give up on the Prophetic Books and revert to learning a few texts instead. Still, despite what the people of Israel have suffered, the Assyrian captivity during Isaiah's time, and Ezekiel's captivity during Nebuchadnezzar's reign, they still have the seeds of rebellion in them, even when they have been taken in captivity in Babylon!

They have not learned a thing. *Eze 14:1 One day, some of Israel's leaders came to me and asked for a message from the LORD. Eze 14:2 While they were there, the LORD said: Eze 14:3 Ezekiel, son of man, these men have started worshiping idols, though they know it will cause them to sin even more. So I refuse to give them a message! Eze 14:4 Tell the people of Israel that if they sin by worshiping idols and then go to a prophet to find out what I say, I will give them the answer their sins deserve. Eze 14:5 When they hear my message, maybe they will see that they need to turn back to me and stop worshiping those idols. Eze 14:6 Now, Ezekiel, tell everyone in Israel: I am the LORD God. Stop worshiping your disgusting idols and come back to me. Eze 14:7 Suppose one of you Israelites or a foreigner living in Israel rejects me and starts worshiping idols. If you then go to a prophet to find out what I say, I will answer Eze 14:8 by turning against you. I will make you a warning to anyone who might think of doing the same thing, and you will no longer belong to my people. Then you will know that I am the LORD and that you have sinned against me*. CEV.

But it is not long before God has had enough of His earthly people, and His presence departs from actual Jerusalem and the Temple, but for where? *Eze 11:21 But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD. Eze 11:22 Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. Eze 11:23 And* ***the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city***.

The Cherubim park on the mount of Olives on the Eastside of Jerusalem, but their destination is not clear, and Ezekiel finishes his vision by being taken back to Babylon. *Eze 11:24 Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.* The Lord didn't have to wait for the buildings to be destroyed, as if hanging on to the bitter end, before, as it were, He was evicted, clinging for dear life to the fabric. No, it was finished!

Ezekiel lives his life as a proverb for Israel, enacting what should happen to them as a living parable, but all to no avail. He holds the faith in spite of those around

him, doing the thankless task with honour. But there are some memorable moments, like the vision of The Valley of Dry Bones.

Eze 37:1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, Eze 37:2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. Eze 37:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Eze 37:4 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Eze 37:5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: Eze 37:6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. Eze 37:7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. Eze 37:8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Eze 37:9 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. Eze 37:10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Eze 37:11 Then he said unto me, ***Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel****: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Eze 37:12* ***Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Eze 37:13 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, Eze 37:14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD****.*

This vision of the Dry Bones is interesting, because the text implies that they are "**the whole house of Israel**". That would **include** all the rebels, adulterers, oppressors and so on, that ever lived, and the wicked people would get another flip of the coin. But the Bible says, *Pro 11:7 When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of evil men perisheth*. That is certainly not the way that redemption and judgement was explained to me, for once life is over and there is no repentance and faith, once the fat lady has sung, so to speak, the curtain closes on life, and what you did and what you were, is fixed, solidified, set in stone, with no hope of changing.

So who is the "whole house of Israel" that Ezekiel talks of? Is it the people who lived then, or looking forward to a spiritual people, the people of the New Covenant, a heavenly people, those people only, made of the saints of two covenants? I think that it is, and that Ezekiel has taken us into the heavens. And

this is the difficulty, as we fail to see where the imagery is leading us. It sounds earthy but the more we look, we see that it must be heavenly.

Well, there is some background to Ezekiel, and I think that we are ready to explore the Final Chapters 40 to 48, the Chapters dealing with Ezekiel's Temple.

The passage under consideration, begins, *Eze 40:1 In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, on that same day the hand of Jehovah was upon me, and he brought me thither. Eze 40:2 In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain; and upon it was as the building of a city, on the south. Eze 40:3 And he brought me thither, and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a flax-cord in his hand, and a measuring-reed; and he stood in the gate. Eze 40:4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thy heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for in order that it might be shewn unto thee art thou brought hither. Declare to the house of Israel all that thou seest.*

Ezekiel was brought in a vision into the land of Israel, 14 years after the City was smitten. 14 years after the Babylonians had trampled and destroyed the city of God, without a Temple in the homeland Israel, and here in exile, in another land far away, Babylon the Great, is shown to the exiled people, a City, "And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thy heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for in order that it might be shewn unto thee art thou brought hither. Declare to the house of Israel all that thou seest."

It is a City already built **not** to be built. It is there to be measured and **declared to the house of Israel**, I presume the house of Israel is then in the land of Babylon, "for in order that it might be shewn unto thee art thou brought hither".

The first question is **"Why show Ezekiel this City and what does it mean to Israel?"** *Eze 40:4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.* Which Israel? It was for them then at that time.

Did the ordinary Israelite care too much for the loss of the Jerusalem Temple? It was after all the domain of the priests and they did all the "bowing and scraping" in secret, and the ordinary Israelites would not have known anything about it unless told. They could have been told anything! *Eze 43:10 Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern. Eze 43:11 And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion*

thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.

The first thing that strikes me is the non-ostentatious nature of this building, no gold or magnificent precious stones. How unlike Solomon's city it is. It is not stated what all the materials that it is made of are. Does it even matter what composites should be chosen, for it is not so much the building, but **the purpose of the building which counts**. No one is told to make this City, it is given by God to think on!

Who is the vision for? Israel at the time or Israel in the future? It is quite clear that only Israel the remnant can receive the things of God. In the Bible, a remnant refers to a small group of people who remain faithful to God despite widespread unbelief or hardship. They are often described as the survivors of a catastrophe or those who remain loyal amidst widespread apostasy. Among all the people that Isaiah speaks to, among the people God will judge unless they repent, the Remnant, like the rest of mankind are sinners and will be until Jesus comes. *1Jn 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*. The Remnant are sinners who will be saved.

This may not seem a very frightening doctrine, but when you consider the implications of it, it becomes much clearer that very few people are in this group, also called the elect, and that is what makes it terrifying. In the days of Noah, in the world before the flood, only 8 people were saved out of the whole population of the world. *1Pe 3:20 Yes, it was Christ, working through the Spirit, who preached to those bound by sin in Noah's day. He was so patient with them, working constantly to reach them as Noah built the ark, yet only eight people responded and had a new life on the other side of that great flood.* Remedy. The ratio of saved to unsaved was very, very small.

Look at what Ezekiel says, *Eze 6:8 Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries. Eze 6:9 And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations*. The Remnant, remember, call to mind the sins of the past, the idolatry, the evils they have done, the abominations, they remember, and they hate it.

Well, you can deceive yourself that all is well when it is not, and that is the point about the Remnant. We say to ourselves, "all is well" because we are surrounded by hundreds of like minds, and we think, "they can't all be wrong", and we forget

that they mostly are all wrong, because only a few are saved, and only a Remnant is called.

Do you see in the verses from Isaiah chapter 11 verse 9, that this remnant from "Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea" are the same people who receive the Holy Spirit? *Act 2:9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Act 2:10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Act 2:11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God*. That sounds like a lot, 3,000 people, but this was only a drop in the ocean of Jerusalem's population on the day of Pentecost, which numbered hundreds of thousands!

The vision of Ezekiel is for Israel at the time of Ezekiel. The remnant receive the scripture. *Eze 40:4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thy heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for in order that it might be shewn unto thee art thou brought hither. Declare to the house of Israel all that thou seest*.

Who is told to build the Temple of Ezekiel which he sees? Nobody is told to build it, nobody is authorised, because "there it is", already established for men to see. Men like to presume things and they get ahead of themselves, and they think that Christ's teaching can be subservient to their own teaching, and they neglect God's teaching for fables and myths which get absorbed into their mythological world of the fantasy Gospel, and this is what they teach. Contrary to opinion, not **one man is told to build the edifice**, the city and temple he sees, because he "sees it" as a fait accompli, God's work, existent, and he says, *Eze 48:35* ***…….and the name of the city from that day, Jehovah is there***.

Was Ezekiel's Temple built or to be built in the future? Both in a sense, because it depends upon what you mean by "to be built". If you take this to be just an abstract structure, the equivalent of bricks and mortar, you are wrong, it already exists in the visions and mind of God. If however you look beyond the mere fabric, there comes into sight, One whose glory is about to transition, to burst upon the scene. *Luk 1:30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. Luk 1:31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. Luk 1:32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: Luk 1:33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end*.

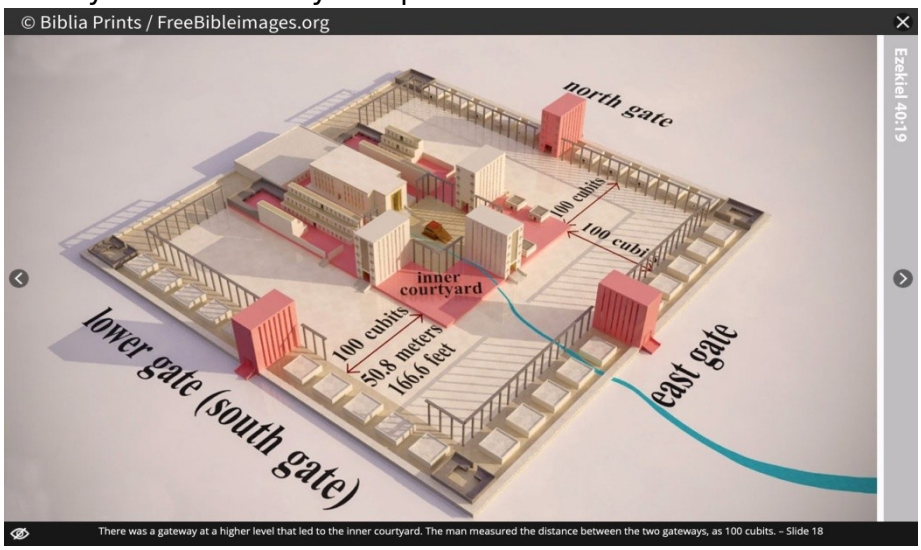
This is what I mean by "built in the future", built as a person, Jesus the incarnate God, the image of God, "now in flesh the godhead see", the reality of all of those types and shadows, the very essence of the Divine, pouring through, from the

man of sorrows from whom we hid, to Jesus whom we can see. Now you see why I said that this edifice is built and to be built.

We should not think like heathens, that God is made of "stuff"". *Act 17:29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God,* ***we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device****. Act 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent*:

God is a reality who becomes clearer, the more we move away from the materialist view of God as being, who is "like" things made by man's hand.

Why give exact measurements but partial (so that you cannot complete it) for a Temple that is only an ideal? Some things are given and some things are not, and that may be God's way in spite of our curious minds. We have enough to meditate on.



It is more shown in plan view than in elevation, and it is not complete. It gives some insights into the city of God, *Joh 10:1 Jesus* ***said: I tell you for certain that only thieves and robbers climb over the fence instead of going in through the gate to the sheep pen.*** *Joh 10:2 But the gatekeeper opens the gate for the shepherd, and he goes in through it. The sheep know their shepherd's voice. He calls each of them by name and leads them out*. It is as if the structure of Christ is there in the building, telling the meaning of His ministry.

For example, the walls of the city are quite open and accessible, yet there is a casemated entrance with guard rooms or chambers. Why have this elaborate set up of steps, a door, and an entrance when you can just jump the walls? It's staring you in the face! Are you prepared to obey Jesus as He directs you to follow Him, or don't you care, and are you just going to go your own way and jump over everything, and say that you do this "obediently" in the name of Jesus?

The "Jewish" nature of this 2nd Temple seems to put this Temple firmly in the Old Testament so what is its relationship to Jesus and the New Testament? It is a strange thing to me, that no attempt was made to build this model of the Temple, to use this Ezekelian model again and to use it as the pattern of the next Temple on earth, but no, they didn't. The Israelites didn't use this pattern at all, despite the result of building the ruins being pitiful. *Hag*

*2:3 Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? **is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing**? Hag 2:4 Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts*:

Ezekiel's Temple stands alone as something much more than an earthly Temple. *Mar 14:58 We heard him say, I will destroy this **temple** that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands…….Mat 12:5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? Mat 12:6 But I say unto you, **That in this place is one greater than the temple**. Mat 12:7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. Mat 12:8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.*

It stands above them all, the greatest house of God. *Rev 21:22 And I saw **no temple therein**: **for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of** it. Rev 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*.

Where does the term Millennial Temple come from? When was it ever used of Ezekiel's temple?

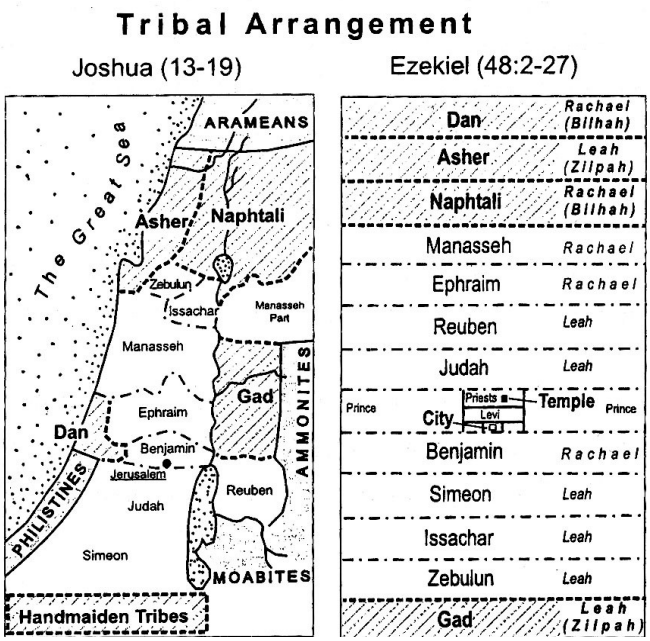
It never did exist as a Bible term ever, only in the overblown imagination of false teachers.

Note this is a **false view**: "The Millennial Temple, as described in the Bible, particularly in the book of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 40-48), is a grand temple that will be built in Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom, a period of 1,000 years of peace and prosperity under Christ's rule. It's envisioned as a place of worship and God's dwelling place, exceeding in size and grandeur all previous temples…….The Millennial Temple. At the end of the Tribulation, Jesus Christ will return to earth in all His glory. He will establish His Kingdom and throne in Jerusalem and begin His thousand-year reign. A glorious Millennial Temple will be constructed, far surpassing the Temples built by Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod……God will use this temple to provide a means to endorse the physical sacrificial system that in turn will point all humanity towards salvation with Jesus, not just the Jewish people. The location reinforces the truth that Israel is the centre of the world, all worship and government." It is from lively unscriptured minds that such false views of this Temple begin to seed.

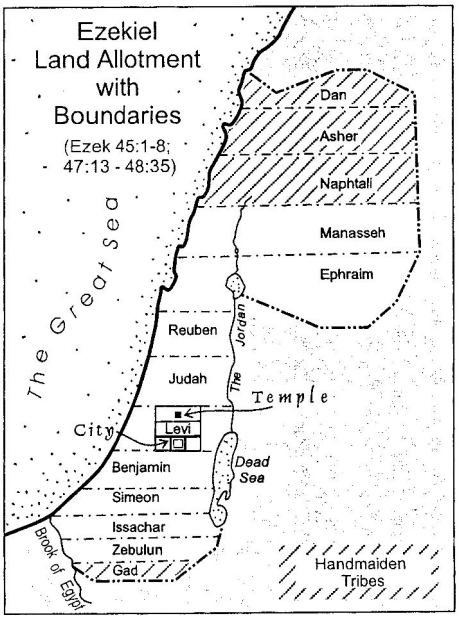
But where in the book of Revelation, in the only place Millennium is mentioned (Chapter 20), does the word Temple occur? It does not! The Temple of Ezekiel never appears in Scripture again from its manifestation in the Old Testament book of Ezekiel.

Why is the order of sacrifices, high priest, the arrangement of the land and tribes, different from Solomon's Temple?

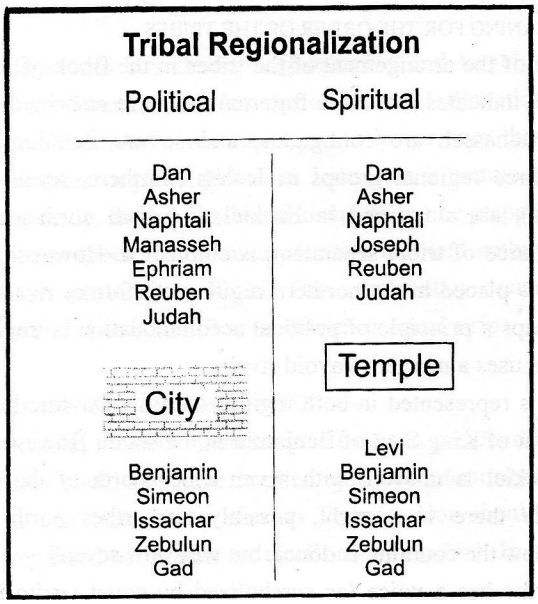
There are many mysteries here and I leave it to you to meditate as to why these subtle differences in order and ceremony take their place in the Temple of Ezekiel..



The land allotment also has changed, moving far up into Galilee, towards Syria. The parcels of land are supposed to be equal but this does not show on the maps.



The description of the boundaries is geographic and largely identifiable as places and physical features. The description of tribal allocations, however, is entirely symbolic. The tribal territories seem to hover over the land, since no landmark anchors them in place. Not even Jerusalem is mentioned (though it is inferred). Consequently, the tribal allocation should not be mapped together with the boundaries.



It may be that Jesus has a whole new order to display in the form of the City/Temple. The Temple is far to the north of the city and much enlarged. It is a huge parcel of land! The Land is an ideal representation of the growth of the Kingdom, pulling in elements of the Old Testament and fusing them with elements of the New Testament. "Thus all Israel shall be saved". The "arrangements" are different to highlight, I think, the difference between Solomon's kingdom, and the far more glorious Kingdom of God. This was given as a promise to the Old Testament people in the form of Ezekiel's City/Temple but it was a promise and did not require action.

Why is there no Candlestick, Table of Shewbread, no Altar of Incense, no Vail and no Ark of the Covenant in Ezekiel's Temple?

Well the straight answer is that they are not needed. *Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. Rev 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for*

the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Rev 21:24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. Rev 21:25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. Rev 21:26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. Rev 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

In Ezekiel's vision of the new Temple, there is no mention of a candlestick or any other specific light source. The absence of a candlestick is not explicitly explained in Ezekiel's vision, but it's been interpreted by some as a significant detail. Some interpretations suggest that the presence of the Lord Himself, whose glory fills the Temple, is the ultimate light source, making other artificial lights unnecessary. Others see the absence of gold and the focus on wood as highlighting the humility and humanity of Christ, implying that the focus is on Christ's presence rather than material splendour.

The absence of this other furniture from the Temple might explain that it is superseded, and redundant. *Col 2:20 You died with Christ. Now the forces of the universe don't have any power over you. Why do you live as if you had to obey such rules as, Col 2:21"Don't handle this. Don't taste that. Don't touch this."? Col 2:22 After these things are used, they are no longer good for anything. So why be bothered with the rules that humans have made up? Col 2:23 Obeying these rules may seem to be the smart thing to do. They appear to make you love God more and to be very humble and to have control over your body. But they don't really have any power over our desires*. The Temple/City is a place of freedom from ritual, moving towards unfettered service to Jesus, the obedience of faith, summed up in the words, "Follow me", which by implication mean, don't follow man.

What feasts are ordered by God in Ezekiel's Temple?

In Ezekiel's vision of the new temple, several feasts are observed, including the weekly Sabbath, Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Firstfruits are also mentioned, but Pentecost (feast of weeks) is not. The feasts of Trumpets and Atonement are also likely included, though not explicitly mentioned. Ezekiel Chapters 45 – 46 show a New order, set in the Old Testament, under Old Testament symbols, to show that a change is to occur.

It is all kept under the Old Testament symbolism so that the people would not balk at so many changes (would you have adopted the New regime?).

Are the sacrifices of this Temple redemptive? *Eze 44:10 And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity. Eze 44:11 Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. Eze*

44:12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity……..

Eze 45:22 And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering……..

2Co 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God……..

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him……..

Heb 7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

The sacrifice is Jesus Christ and therefore redemptive.

Why is Ezekiel's Temple simpler as far as the building materials go? Christ is simple, He needs no embellishment, no adornment because we are IN Him and that is sufficient.

Who is the Prince? *Eze 44:2 Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut. Eze 44:3 It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same. Eze 44:4 Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD: and I fell upon my face.*

He is the Prince of peace who will under God enact His will, as vicegerent of the Kingdom.

Why is Ezekiel's Temple outside of the City of Jerusalem, to the North? *Rev 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Rev 21:24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.*

It is a different place, and perhaps to emphasise this, it is given under these heads. It is a big land grant which takes it beyond the confines of the first Temple/City.